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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN NORTH VIETNAM

SOUTH OF THE 20TH PARALLEL (2-8 SEPTEMBER 1968)

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9 SEPTEMBER 1968

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
9 September 1968

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Recent Activities in North Vietnam
South of the 20th Parallel
(2-8 September 1968)

Summary

North Vietnamese military and logistics activities in the Panhandle were hampered by heavy rains and flooding during the past week. Truck activity [redacted] was down sharply to only a third of the weekly averages noted since 31 March. Watercraft sightings were at the lowest level since early July. [redacted]

[redacted]
Rail lines between the 19th and 20th Parallels were openly moving supplies in daylight hours to points adjacent to the 19th Parallel just prior to the recent adverse weather, but no information is available on rail traffic during the past week. MIG aircraft continued to operate south of the 19th Parallel despite the weather, but no air engagements were reported.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared jointly by the Office of Economic Research and the Office of Current Intelligence and was coordinated with the Director's Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs.

Weather

1. Extremely poor weather conditions prevailed throughout most of the week in the Panhandle, greatly hampering air operations and logistic activities. Daily rainfall between 3 and 6 September averaged 12 to 16 inches, and winds of up to 65 miles per hour battered areas south of the 19th Parallel.

Truck Traffic

2. Truck sightings and truck attrition [redacted] dropped sharply because of adverse weather during the past week to only about a third of the weekly averages noted since 1 April, as shown in the following tabulation:

	<u>Trucks</u>				
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>De- stroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Total Destroyed and Damaged</u>	<u>Effective Losses a/</u>
This week b/ (2-8 Sep)	211	57	29	86	50
Last week (26 Aug- 1 Sep)	681	199	74	273	168
Weekly average (since 1 Apr)	684	125	77	202	113



b. Preliminary data.

3. Poor road conditions greatly restricted truck traffic. [redacted] all coastal routes and portions of inland Routes 82, 101, and 137 were impassable because of flooding.

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[redacted] the upper portions of Route 101 or Route 15, but flooded conditions probably prevailed on these routes as well. [redacted] of the coastal areas south of Ha Tinh also showed extensive flooding of the lowland areas.

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4. Truck concentrations [redacted] were for the most part small, but some of the concentrations included SAM and POL vehicles [redacted] A group of 50 vehicles was detected [redacted] on Route 15, several miles south of the junction of Routes 7 and 15. At least six trucks were reported destroyed and four trucks damaged as a result of attacks against this concentration. A convoy of [redacted] carrying probable SA-2

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type trucks were spotted heading south. A concentration of at least 11 POL trucks was detected in the village of Vinh Lai on Route 1A, about five miles north of the 19th Parallel. [redacted]

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Waterways

5. Watercraft sightings [redacted] dropped to the lowest levels since early July, primarily as a result of poor weather. Storms caused flooding along three of the most important water routes in Route Package I -- the Nuyen Nay, Song Troc, and the Song Giang. [redacted] these rivers had completely inundated the surrounding lowland areas. The damage caused by flooding to

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the numerous transshipment and storage areas located along these key waterways is likely to be only temporary.

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Rail Activity

8. The Qui Vinh Railroad Yard and transshipment area, located about 20 miles north of the 19th Parallel, was being used openly for daylight operations prior to the current spell of bad weather.

[redacted] four small loaded flatcars standing on a siding adjacent to a heavily used truck transshipment point. A short distance away, a truck locomotive used for pulling small two-axle cars was sighted parked on another rail siding, and on the main line, just south of the transshipment point, a train consisting of two truck locomotives and three empty flatcars was noted.

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9. The Tu My rail spurs located immediately above the 19th Parallel have become a part of a large transshipment and storage complex that functions in part as the southern terminus for rail traffic from Thanh Hoa.

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[redacted] showed a moderate buildup in rail stock on the northernmost spur and also an increase in supplies stacked alongside the spur. Tu My is located only one mile from the bombing zone and offers a convenient transshipment and storage point within the sanctuary area from which supplies can be safely and quickly moved into regions that remain under air attack.

Air Operations

[redacted]
[redacted] MIG's were active south of the 19th Parallel on 8 September in reaction to US strike aircraft. No air engagements were reported, however [redacted]

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